1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

•342
361
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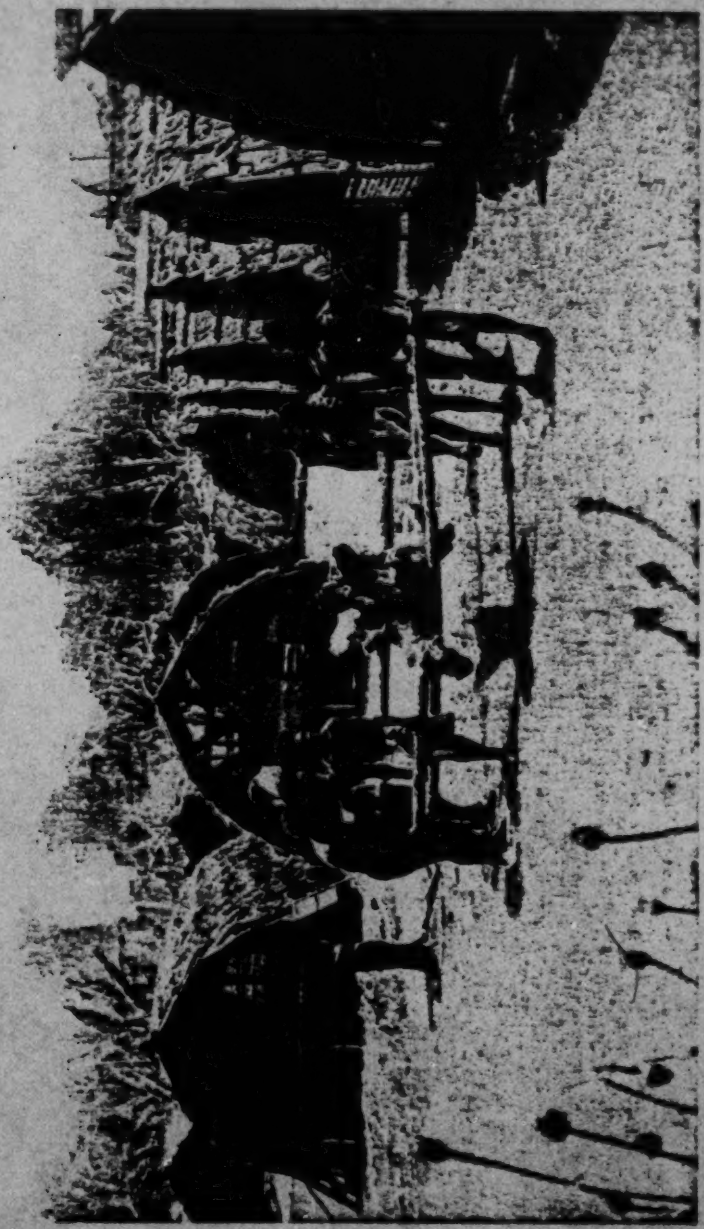

KURTATCHI VILLAGE

[facing p. iii]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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This corresponds fairly closely with the observations recorded at Kieta. According to the statements of white residents, there would appear to have been much less north-west wind during the year I spent on the islands than is usually the case. Possibly in years when this change in the direction of the wind is more marked, there may be a more definite 'rainy season' than was experienced by me. The islands are outside the hurricane belt. Only on two occasions (Jan. 11 and July 9, 1930) was the wind strong enough to do real damage to the native huts, which are not built to withstand a gale. The former of these was remarked by the white residents as being a south-east wind, unusual at that time, when the north-west wind should have been blowing. The direction and force of the wind are important to the natives because when a heavy sea is running their fishing operations are badly hampered, and this, if continued for more than a day or two, means insufficient variety of diet.

NATIVE REACTION TO CLIMATE

All these people feel the cold very much. They dislike rain, partly because it brings cold, but also for the wetting, and when forced to go out in it will cut a large leaf, probably of bush taro, to use as an umbrella. During a spell of wet weather, with the thermometer on my verandah ranging somewhere in the 70's instead of the usual 80–90°, they went about with their shoulders hunched and their arms folded across their chests, looking the picture of misery. Any blankets or towels that they happened to possess were wrapped round them, and the few proud owners of a white man's vest or coat wore it day and night. They seemed to begin to feel cold wherever the temperature dropped below 80°. Fires would be lighted, and a group would soon gather round, sitting almost on the top of them, or people would light torches of coco-nut-palm leaves and hold them close to their bodies. I have seen them take a smouldering log and all but burn their skins with it.

They will work all day in blazing sun in the taro garden or fishing on the reef if the spirit moves them. But they do not sit in the sun, and they keep their children out of it. A mother may be obliged to take her baby with her when she goes to search for shellfish on the reef, but she will keep its head carefully under her hood. The more enterprising put up shelters behind their houses to give them shade.

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give a name even to those which they say are of no use to them. Unfortunately, in many cases I was unable to identify the plants of which the native names were given to me.[1] Sometimes the same term will be used for a number of plants of similar habits of growth, e.g. *wanis*, fairly translatable by our generic word 'grass', and *kurits*, used for a hanging vine or creeper, often as a prefix attached to another word. There is a generic word for 'tree'—*no'on*, which also means wood, especially firewood (*kuip no'on*, to cut firewood, one of the women's daily tasks).

Some of the trees appear not to be indigenous. Mrs. Hadden told me that her father, Mr. Parkinson, the anthropologist, who was the first white man to live in this region (about forty years ago), introduced some of the citrus fruits and other useful trees, which have since spread rapidly throughout the area.

The natives cultivate coco-nut palms, areca palms, and bananas, as well as taro (*Colocasia esculenta*) and other vegetables (some account of their food plants is given in Chapter VIII). Bread-fruit trees and canarium almonds are highly prized, the position of each one is known, and they are always spared when fresh ground is cleared for a new taro garden. Some of the trees which go to make up the uncut bush yield a hard timber which is found useful by the resident whites for building and for piles, especially such as withstand the ravages of salt water. But the difficulty of transportation renders these of no commercial value. The natives use them for house-posts and other purposes, but prefer the soft-timbered trees for their canoes. The most striking objects in the bush are huge trees with enormous flanges buttressing their trunks, and the aerial roots of the banyans, which serve the natives as ridge poles for their huts. Several different kinds of palm and of bamboo are used for a variety of purposes. A big carophyllum tree is a frequent landmark on the lee shore, affording welcome shade under which the men sit mending their nets and the women making hoods or baskets or playing with their babies. A large fallen trunk on the beach at Petats was a favourite gathering-place for all. Parts of the shore are covered with mangrove swamps, which make landing impossible.

Of smaller growth, there are several kinds of croton and hibiscus,

[1] For the identification of some of them I am indebted to the authorities of Kew Gardens. A list of these will be found in Appendix III. Others I have recognised from the description given by Guppy.

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PLATE 3

133

a. VIEW FROM CLIFFS AT KURTATCHI

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b. NEW-STYLE HOUSES, BUKA

[facing p. 20]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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much laughter. He was quite courteous to me when I visited him, but difficult to engage in conversation, and very chary of his words.

Every hamlet contains one or more huts set apart for the exclusive use of the men and boys (*tobár*). In the Bougainville villages these must be used by the boys wearing the *upi* (headgear indicating that they have not finished their puberty ceremonies, see Ch. VI), who are prohibited from entering any hut occupied by a woman. In Buka, where the boys do not wear the *upi*, their segregation is less rigid, but they may sleep in the 'men's house' if they wish. In both districts unattached men usually sleep there, and male guests from other villages are accommodated there if their visit extends overnight. The men say that this is a good idea because it prevents the visitors from meddling with the village women. These huts do not differ in any respect from the others (see Pl. 30 *b*). They vary in size according to the number of people likely to use them. There seems to be no fixed situation assigned to them in relation to the other huts of the village. In some hamlets they stand in line with the others, in some they are off to one side a little. In other places they occupy part of the ground in front of the line, if this can be arranged without encroaching too much upon the space needed for dancing. Any hut occupied by a man living alone, e.g. an old widower, may be used to house some of the boys if occasion requires. Where the *tobār* is in the middle of the village, it serves as a gathering-place for the men in their idle moments. Where it stands apart, the men tend to congregate in the front portion of the hut belonging to the *tumaun* (chief), which has a kind of porch attached to it.

Most villages are fenced except where they face the shore. In the beach villages the fence is made of stones and chunks of coral rock, in the cliff villages of saplings put in green and left to grow. It does not seem to be a survival of an old stockade, but a recent innovation, erected at the instance of the Government with the idea of keeping the pigs away from the dwellings, but as it is always full of gaps, either due to neglect or left intentionally to facilitate entrance and exit, in most cases it fails to function. On the outskirts are planted banana, bread-fruit, and other useful trees. Coco-nuts are not liked in close proximity to the huts, as the heavy nuts are apt to do damage in falling. At some place convenient for launching, there will be one or more sheds for

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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Kurtatchi

343 keeping plank canoes (*mos*). Dug-outs are usually left on the
501 beach, care being taken to draw them up above high-water mark.

514 No special areas are set apart for latrines. People go into the bush, as a rule not very far away, the women keeping to the area behind their own quarters at the back of the line of huts. In the case of a shore village, the men and boys wander along the beach.

364 Some attempt is made—rather spasmodically—to keep the village
412 clean, each woman sweeping the area round her own hut, with a broom made of bundles of the midribs of coco-nut palm leaves, tied at one end, without a handle. One man at Kurtatchi, more inventive than the others, made a rough wooden shovel, with handle all in one piece, with which to remove pigs' dung. Different villages vary very greatly in the extent to which they are swept and cared for, and as dogs and pigs wander round freely, while everybody constantly flings down areca-nut husks, bits of coco-nut, and miscellaneous oddments, even a short period of neglect suffices to give the village a very unkempt appearance.

342 *Huts*. At Petats, and a few other villages, under the tuition of
[177] the Missions, the natives now build themselves houses raised on piles, with plank walls and high-pitched roofs (see Pl. 3 *b*). But in most places, especially in Bougainville, the native type of hut still predominates, built on the bare earth, thatched with sago-palm leaves in the shape of a broad gothic arch, with the roof almost touching the ground on both sides. They are all exactly alike; their appearance can be seen from the photographs. There are no windows. At each end is a very small opening (a typical one measured 21×16 in.), serving as entrance and exit, closed by having planks set across it at night or when the hut is left empty.

[439] At the present time a few natives have plank doors swung on hinges and perhaps fastened with a bolt bought at the Chinese stores. The doors are raised about 3 ft. from the ground-level, and in front of each is a sort of shelf of split areca-palm trunks, 2 or 3 ft. in width, which serves as a sitting platform or verandah, as well as

342 an aid to scrambling in and out. The end of the hut, facing the
562 dancing space, with its entrance and verandah, is called *tagoas*,
784 and is reserved for the men, women being allowed to use it only on certain ceremonial occasions. The women's place is at the back, called *babots*, including not only the back 'verandah' but all that portion of ground which adjoins the back of the huts, irregular in its outline because the larger huts project into it farther than the

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
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PLATE 4

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AT THE *BABOTS*, KURTATCHI

[facing p. 22]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 5

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a. DESERTED VILLAGE OF GOMEN

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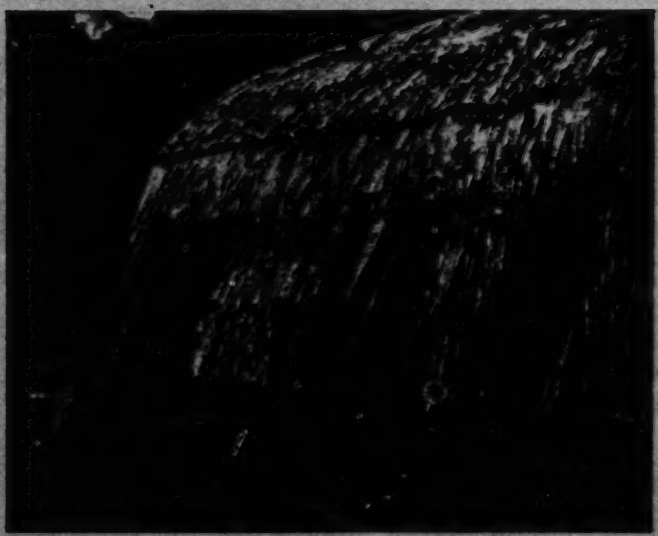

b. AIRING THE BEDS

[Facing p.23]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

others (see Pl. 4). Here the women work, cook, and gossip; the men may join them if they wish, except the boys wearing the *upi* (leaf hat connected with puberty ceremonies), to whom all that portion of the village is rigorously taboo.

The interior is alike in all. There are no dividing partitions. The floor is the bare earth, trodden hard. The only furniture is a row of broad planks propped up on small logs, along one side of the hut, which serve as beds. Short lengths of bamboo are used as pillows. Between each plank is just space enough for a small fire. There is probably a place for roasting taro with the aid of hot stones, the native oven, at the farther end of the hut near the women's entrance. Cooking pots, the cleaned-out coco-nut shells used to store water, packs for carrying taro, and a few personal possessions, lie on the ground; sometimes a plank is laid across two poles to form a shelf on which such objects can be kept out of the way. Bundles containing more valuable property hang from the rafters, tied up in banana fibre or old loin-cloths. Every returned plantation hand is the proud possessor of a wooden box with lock and key, part of the kit which must be provided by the employer for each of his 'boys' when they 'sign on', which he displays in a prominent position. All sorts of treasures such as medicine bundles, knives, &c., are stowed away between the thatch and the supporting rafters. Nets and banana-fibre straps for carrying burdens hang over the cross-poles that form part of the framework of the hut, and there is usually a basket containing some pieces of cold taro in case any one feels hungry at a time when it is not convenient to cook.

As a rule, the household consists of father, mother, and children. In the case of polygynous marriages, each wife will usually have her own hut, particularly if she has children, and the husband distributes his company as he pleases, spending a certain amount of time with the woman who ranks as his chief wife, but most of it with the one who for the time being stands highest in favour. A wife who is old or incapacitated, or one whose children have all started out for themselves, will often share a hut with one of the other wives, not always amicably. In some of the Buka villages large huts are now built, housing all the wives of one man; the interior of these is partitioned off into rooms for each. An aged parent of either sex may also form part of the household, the taboo between mother-in-law and son-in-law being relaxed when the former is old.

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lived, the same kind of life as commoners, observing the same taboos, working at the same tasks, eating the same food, and living in the same kind of huts. To this last statement there is one exception. The hut in which lives the chief wife of the head of the *tsunaun* lineage, who is usually herself *tsunaun*, has an extension in front of it, roofed, and walled at the sides but open in front, and provided with the usual platform. This is called the 'eye' of the house. Here is kept the slit-gong belonging to the *tsunaun*, which is beaten on ceremonial occasions as well as for dances. Here the older men of the village will sometimes congregate to talk, while the boys and younger men use the front of the men's house for that purpose. Except on certain ceremonial occasions, women are not allowed there, as it is only an extension of the *tagoan*, or men's verandah, of the ordinary houses. This extension makes the house the longest in the village. Its interior is no different from that of other houses. The houses occupied by other members of the *tsunaun* lineage do not differ at all, either inside or out, from those of commoners. There is no distinctive dress or attached ornament peculiar to *tsunaun*, but some of the cicatrized patterns may not be cut upon commoners.

So far as I can ascertain, the prestige of a *tsunaun* was never directly a matter of the possession of property. He is not expected to give large feasts at his own expense. If the group is concerned in an important ceremony, for which much food must be provided, he will contribute as much as possible, but the others must bring their own contributions as well. He does, as a rule, own more strings of ceremonial currency than most people can boast of, either handed down on the death of former *tsunaun* or received as payment for favours shown. But he needs more than a commoner to provide for the marriage payments of the young men of his lineage, who, being themselves *tsunaun*, should marry women equal to them in position.

A *tsunaun* usually has several wives, but that is not in itself a sign of rank, since commoners may also have as many as they wish and can provide for. He will, however, usually be betrothed to at least two while still a mere boy, whereas the commoner is probably betrothed in youth to one only, pleasing himself as to any subsequent marriages. It is usual for the first wife of a man who is *tsunaun* to be herself *tsunaun*, belonging to another village, and usually to another clan. His other wives may, if he so desires, be

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
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taro has been cooked, and taro which has been boiled, not roasted in the embers. The taro for this meal, which must, in consequence of the prohibitions above mentioned, be eaten without its usual relish of fish or flesh, is brought home wrapped up in leaves, so that it is never exposed to view in the open air. The reason given for this precaution is that if it were so exposed, Manu, the big brown eagle, might see it, in which case the child would die. It will be remembered that Manu is the most important totem among these people, but the precaution is taken irrespective of the clan to which the child belongs. Manu appears to be regarded in this connexion as a being of whom the people are afraid, and who has power to harm the new member of the community. The importance of this first meal is further emphasized by the fact that the baby's mother's father, if available, is considered the appropriate person to go and fetch the taro, a task which under ordinary circumstances is never performed by a man. It is brought into the hut by the front or men's entrance (*tagoan*), instead of, as would happen in the usual course of things, by the women's entrance (*babots*).

COUVADE

As soon as the expectant mother feels the pains beginning, her husband must stop working, and remain indoors, not in the hut where his wife is confined, but in that of another of his wives, or of a neighbour. He must spend his time in sitting idle or dozing, and must on no account carry, or even lift, anything heavy, or touch a knife, axe, or any sharp or pointed instrument. To do the former would injure the child, the latter would cause it to die. This continues for three days. On the fourth day he may go into the hut and see his child. After this he is allowed to walk about the village, but must not go outside it. He must still refrain from working. On the fifth day he goes, with his wife, and washes in the sea; these are his first ablutions since the child was born. Then he may take an axe or a knife and go into the hut and pretend to cut the child; this removes the taboo on his use of sharp instruments, and he may now resume his usual activities. In the case of the child whose birth is described in the previous pages, this cutting was not done till the morning of the sixth day, but in discussions on the subject the fifth day was always stated as the appropriate time. It would appear, therefore, that five days is the minimum for the observance of couvade.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 14

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a. CHILDREN PLAYING: KURTATCHI

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b. DIVING: AT PETATS

[Facing p. 174]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 17

852
565
292
535
342
361

WOMEN'S DANCE FOR WANIAS

[facing p. 192]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

altogether. The men of the village set up two posts in front of the *tobar*, and fix poles horizontally between them. Food, chiefly consisting of coco-nuts, is then hung over these bars. The novices come up with their amro, and walk round the poles as at a *kōma*. This is done in the afternoon. The mothers of the boys then look at their sons for the last time before they put on the *upi* and are removed from home care. There is much display of grief, which is probably not only ritual but real, for the putting on of the *upi* makes a break in the family circle. After a few turns round the poles the boys go into the *tobar*. The one who is second in order of importance goes first, and the highest in rank second. The one of most importance is the novice belonging to the *tsunaun* lineage who stands nearest to the succession to the headship. At Kurtatchi it was Wakuis, Pinari's sister's son, a younger brother of the heir, Kakari. The second was Sankuro, whose descent is given on p. 77. The line of novices and *amro* pass straight through the *tobar*, and come out at the door on its other side. The *amro* take their charges down to a special place on the beach, where the boys are made to drink a mouthful of sea-water. This part of the beach is reserved for them to bathe from, and the women must keep away from it.

After this they remain all the time in the bush, no longer returning to the village at night. Their going away is called *watagi'upi* (*watagio* = get out of the way). They make a little house at a special place set apart for them, and there they must sleep for the whole of their period of seclusion. This place and the shelter built on it is called *nōnō*, and is strictly taboo to all but the novices and their *amro*, who sleep with them on the same plank bed. The shelter is a very rough construction, and is allowed to fall to pieces when they have finished with it.

Rules for the novices.

No instruction on tribal lore or on sexual matters appears to be given to the novices during their seclusion, but the *amro* tell them how they are expected to behave in regard to the wearing of the *upi*, that they must never be seen without it by a woman, that they must fasten it tightly on their heads when they play roughly, that they must make a new cover for it out of *win* leaves when it gets dirty, and so on.

All the time the novices stop in the *nōnō* before the *wapi*

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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they wanted the *tsunaun* to see the hats they had made. All the men who were *tsunaun* said: 'They are good. You go now and eat some pig. You are making very sacred things.'

The teller of this story volunteered the statement that nowadays, if a woman behaved as did the woman in the tale, they would not be able to kill her, because the Government had forbidden it. They would all have intercourse with her, and then somebody would 'make poison' against her and she would die, but it would not be known who was responsible for her death.

PRELIMINARIES

When all the preparations are complete, a hut is built in the bush, and the boys must sleep there for two nights. The *amro* accompany them. During this time the boys are not allowed to eat anything except one small piece of taro. The reason given for this abstinence is that if they were to eat too much they would be too heavy to be carried on the shoulders of the *amro* during the ceremony.

While the boys are in the bush, the people of the village where the *watawulʃ* is to be held set up platforms in the centre of the village and cover them with food. All the villages which are sending boys to the ceremony help in providing this food. Vast quantities are required, as people come from villages scattered over a wide area. At the one to be held at Kurtatchi they were expecting contingents from the whole of the north coast of Bougainville and all the islands of Buka. Failure to provide enough food for the assembled multitude would in the olden days have resulted in a fight ending in the breaking up of the village, and even now resentment would be shown by wanton damage to taro crops and coco-nut palms, if nothing worse.

Meanwhile, a palisade has been erected round the 'long house', so high that the women cannot see over it. Then the men go into the bush and fetch two tall trees. Young canarium almonds are frequently chosen for this purpose, owing to their tall slender trunks, though they are not felled under ordinary circumstances, as their nuts are highly prized as an article of diet. If there is a *wapi* ceremony going on anywhere in the neighbourhood, these trees must be pulled up by the roots instead of being felled, otherwise the *urar* who are about in the bush will be angry.

The selected trees are called *ruror*. They are brought near, but

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 33

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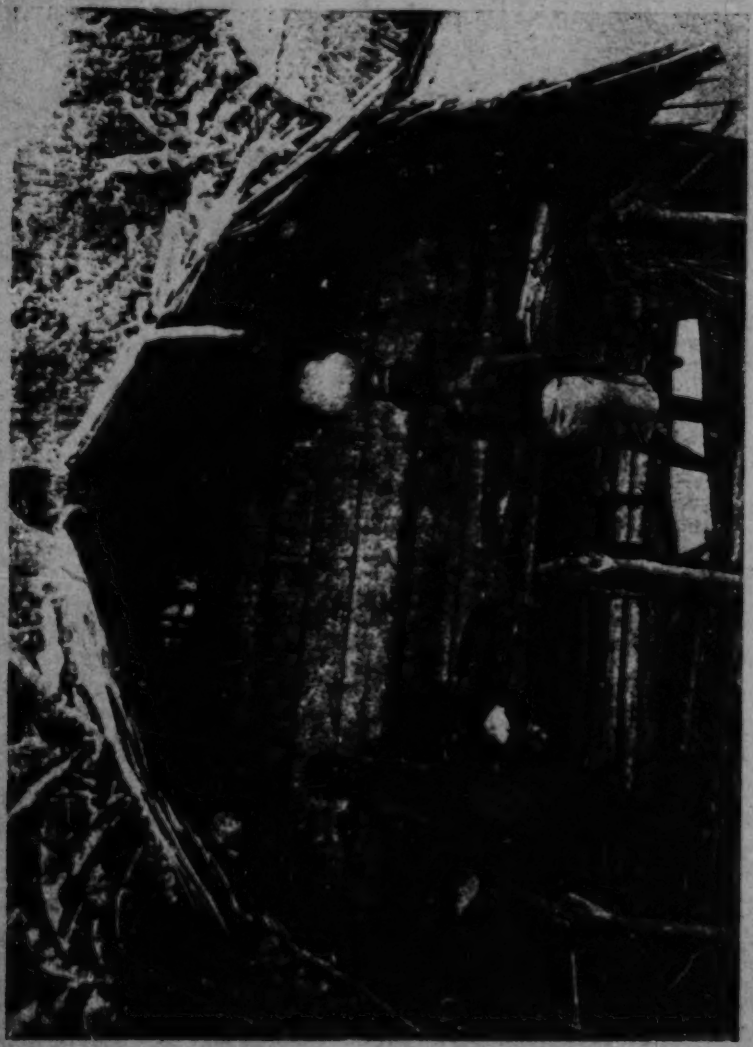


MAKING CEREMONIAL PUDDING

[Facing p. 274]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 48

396

a. MAKING A DUG-OUT CANOE

396
342

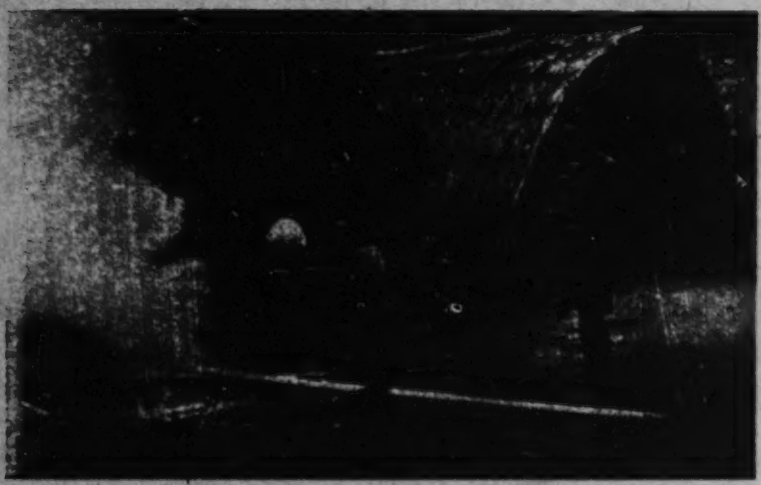
b. FILLING IN THE HOLES

[facing p. 364]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 50

396
516
342



a. CHARRING PLANKS FOR *MON*

396

b. PARTLY BUILT *MON*

[facing p. 374]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 52

396
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342
276
352

CARVING *WATSINAN*

[facing p. 378]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

484 The people of Hanahan go to Green Island to get *beroan* (shell currency) and fish, because the fishing at Hanahan is not good. They also
439 buy pigs, because the pigs of Green Island are bigger than the pigs at
197 Hanahan. The people of Green Island are the same people as those of Hanahan, and talk the same language, but the people of Green Island talk very slowly, it sounds as if they were sad and wanted to cry. (Here the speaker gave an imitation, in a high-pitched voice with a whining tone and a drop at the end of every sentence.) They pay for the *beroan* and the pigs and the fish with taro, pots, and paint, which they get from Tiop.

484 They stop two days, and fish; there are plenty of fish at Green Island.
[789] When the men are ready to come back, a man of Green Island takes hold of the canoe and says some words to make the canoe run quickly and come back to Hanahan. The people of Green Island know these words, the Hanahan people do not know them. They leave at dusk, and come back to Hanahan in the early morning. They do not take so long as they did to go to Green Island, because the sea pushes the canoe.

502 Here the narrator ceased, but further inquiry elicited the information that they steer by the same stars, watching till they are high enough in the sky to be seen in front of the canoe. When they get near home they look for the point called Hanapan (the most northerly headland on Buka) and for the highest mountain on Buka, which they call Langono (I am not sure just where this is). When they get closer to the shore they must steer away from the island or else they would be carried round the northern edge of the island on to the Lontis coast. They beach the canoe at sunrise.

House-building

361 From the plan and description of the village given in Chapter I, it will be seen that the huts (*inu*) are always set up in lines. When a new one is to be added to the line, the position of the front is determined by stretching a piece of creeper or fibre string along the line of the houses already in position, and continuing it farther to the site of the new one. The backs of the huts are not alined, as some are much longer than others, owing to the fact that increase in size is always obtained by adding to the length at the back, the width remaining practically constant in all.

342 The first procedure in house-building is to put in pieces of stick to mark the corners, using the string as above described. Along the sides, uprights (*kurik*) are set up in double rows, just wide enough apart for the insertion between them of the slats which they are

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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Kurtatchi

PLATE 54

342

a. FIXING THE *ORÓR*

b. CARVING THE *TOAN*

HOUSE-BUILDING

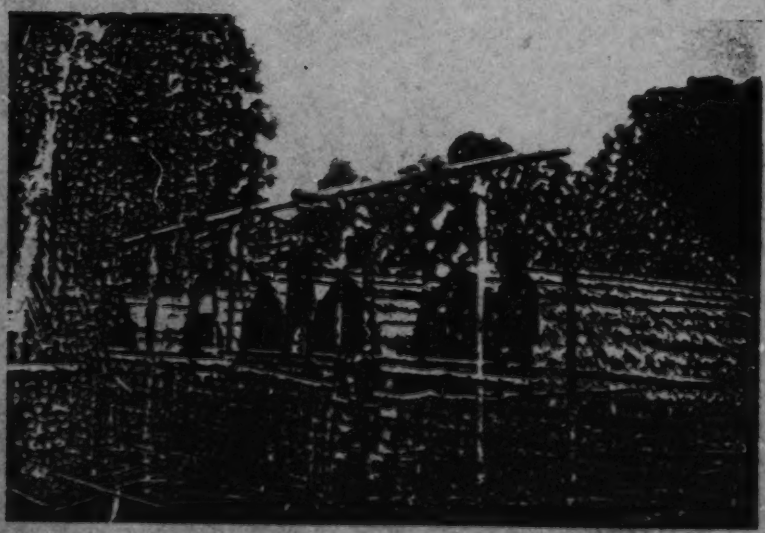
[Facing p 382]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

PLATE 55

342

a. SETTING UP THE *TOAN*



b. PUTTING ON THE *PA'I*

HOUSE-BUILDING

[facing p. 383]

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

intended to support. These uprights are set up about 2½ to 3 feet apart; they vary in number according to the length of the house. Narrow slats, flat on the inside, but left slightly rounded on the outside as they came from the tree, are inserted between the two rows of uprights, and held in place by being tied with rattan to the uprights between which they are supported. These slats are obtained from the areca-palm or one of its numerous wild varieties. The two lines of slats thus arranged edge to edge form the side walls (*orov*), the height of which is about 2 feet (Pl. 54 *a*). The *kuvik* are cut off just above these. 342

The house-posts (*toan*) must then be set up. Holes are made for them by pushing a pole into the ground. One man stands in position beside each hole, and all the posts are set in at the same time (Pl. 55 *a*). They are grasped in both hands and raised high in the air, and then thrust into the ground with all the force at the worker's command. This is repeated several times until the hole is deep enough, and adjustments are made so that the height of each post is correct. If the men cannot drive the posts in far enough they will sharpen the point, if this does not suffice they will cut a piece off. They do not take the trouble to drive them in far enough to be really steady. The structure holds together in its entirety, but each individual post will probably be shaky. The number of posts varies with the length of the hut, three for an ordinary living house and four or five for a men's house is the usual number. The principal house of the *tumaun* also has four or five, owing to the addition of a porch in front of it. The posts are in three rows, one row along the middle line and one on either side. The posts are made of hard wood, and as they are, on this account, somewhat laborious to fashion, they are often brought from an old house to serve in a new one. They are carved at the upper end in a simple design which does not vary much in different posts (Pl. 54 *b*). Any one may carve them. The top is shaped into a shallow curve in which to rest the long horizontals which they are intended to support. The posts for the centre of the hut (*gus*), supporting the ridge-pole, are slightly higher than those on either side (*soal*). [565]

The horizontal supports for the roof (*pa'i*) consist of the aerial roots of the banyan, which are of uniform thickness throughout their length. They are selected some time before they are required, and laid out to season, kept from the ground by resting upon logs. Several men are required for putting them into position on the top [824]

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342 of the *toan*, and every one manifests great anxiety till they are pronounced suitably placed (Pl. 55 *b*).

824 Thin, flexible strips of the wood of a tree called *ariko* are prepared; the upper end of each is split and inserted into a second strip, forming an arch. This arch is lifted by a man at each end of it and fitted over the *pa'i*, so that the apex of the arch, formed by the crossed split ends, rests on the ridge-pole (Pl. 56 *a*). These form the rafters (*walwal* or *tartaras*) to which the thatch is to be fixed. They are tied firmly to the top of the *oror*. After a single pair has been put on in front, another at the back, and one at the level of each row of house-posts, the others are put on in groups of ten or more. Laths (*papom*) are then laid along the length of the

824 house, and each of these rafters is tied to every lath separately, where they cross each other, by means of a tough fibre taken from the inner bark of a tree called *rinto*. The fibre is passed over the top, up from below, and over the top again, the ends being tucked under. A large house will have six laths on each side. The one nearest the ridge-pole is fixed first, then the next below it, and so on. The lowest one has to hold the lower ends of the rafters down over the edge of the walls; it is difficult to fix owing to the amount of spring in the rafters, which are held taut with logs rolled against their free ends while they are being tied on to the lowest pair of laths a little higher up. The ends are left projecting, but are cut straight, leaving enough to overlap the walls about 6 inches. Another *pa'i* is laid upon the crossed ends of the rafters where they rest upon the ridge-pole, and tied down to it by fibre twisted round between the rafters. This is finally covered by a piece of bark or by a matting made by plaiting together the fronds of two coco-nut palm leaves, forming the apex of the roof.

The house is now ready to be thatched. The thatch is made of

824 the leaves of the sago palm. In some places, where sago palm is scarce, the long, narrow leaves of a species of river reed (*manob*) are used instead. The sago-palm leaves are brought to the village tied in great bundles. When required for use, the mid-rib is first removed, and leaves are then folded over a long strip of bamboo,

413 generally two, sometimes three, together. A slit is then made
825 through all the layers just below the cane by means of a pointed implement made of the bone of a porpoise or a dugong. These are preferred to European knives, which are liable to split the leaves too far. Holding open the slit by means of the same im-

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PLATE 56

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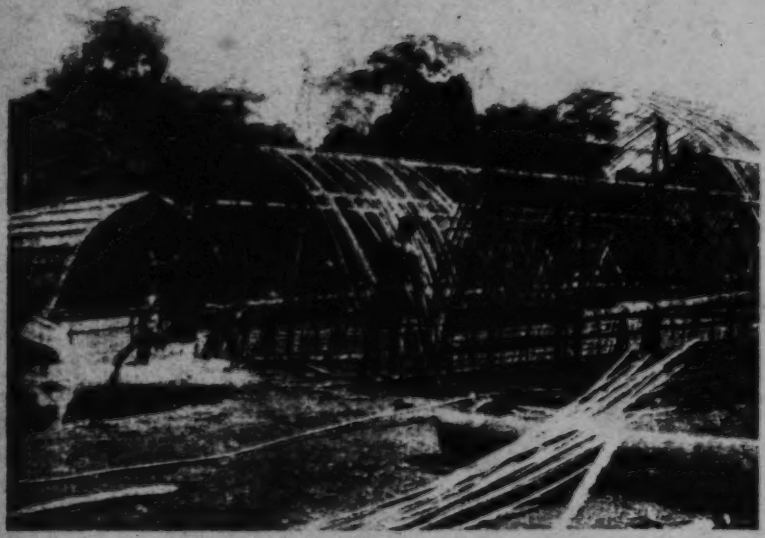

a. PUTTING ON THE *TATARAS*

[516]

b. MAKING THATCH [facing p. 384]

HOUSE-BUILDING

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342 plement, the worker then slides a thinner strip of cane through it, thus fixing the leaves down firmly (Pl. 56 *b*). This process is continued along the length of the supporting cane, some 6 or 8 feet.

A number of these lengths of thatch are prepared, men, women, and children all lending a hand. They are put on in layers, beginning at the top of the roof, each succeeding layer being tucked underneath the one above it. Ties of the outer rind of the stem of a plant called *nin* are used to fasten the thatch to the rafters, the ties being placed at intervals of about 2 feet. If the lengths of thatch are made to overlap closely, a very good watertight roof is the result, but the work is often hastened at the expense of efficiency by making them overlap only a little, forming a roof which is very liable to be blown out of place by wind.

342 [177] The two ends of the long, narrow hut are filled in by sheets of bark tied together and to the house-posts. Nowadays, when metal tools are available, planks are more frequently used for this purpose, provided the owner of the house can obtain nails. A space is left, usually not more than slightly over a foot in breadth and rather under 2 feet in height, to serve as a door (see Pl. 33). There is a door at each end of the hut. Planks are placed against these openings at night, secured by propping a log against them on the inside. A few people have now procured hinges or staples and have constructed doors which can be opened and shut, and are sometimes fitted with a bolt. Entrance and exit by these small apertures is a matter requiring considerable agility to the unaccustomed. To enter it is first necessary to climb upon a platform about 3 feet high, which is fixed in front of the end wall, and is made of areca-palm planks resting on three stout poles firmly fixed [517] in the ground. This verandah is much used as a place to sit, sleep, and eat.

342 562 Both ends of the house are exactly alike, but the front end with its verandah (together called *tagoan*), which faces the cleared space used for dances, is reserved for the men, women being allowed to occupy it only on certain ceremonial occasions. The women's end is the back (*babots*), and here most of their time is [882] spent while they are at home. The men may join them, but all the women's side of the line is strictly taboo to the boys wearing the *upi*.

342 565 The house belonging to the man of greatest importance in the village (*tsunaun tʃan*) has a porch between the end wall and the

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verandah, which is covered by the roof but is open in front. This is called the 'eye' of the hut (*matan pi inu*). It serves as a gathering-place for the men for informal discussions of matters of importance, as well as for social chats. In it are kept the slit-gongs belonging to the *tsunaun*, one at least, and possibly two.

All the able-bodied men and boys in the village are expected to help in the building of a house, but most of the work will be done by the owner and his more intimate friends. The workmen are not paid, but can count upon similar assistance when they require it. The old men say that the younger ones are now no longer willing to help in this way, they only want to go off into the bush or to laze on the shore. Even in the case of the men's houses, much exhortation on the part of the *tsunaun* was necessary before the requisite amount of labour was forthcoming.

Dimensions of Huts in Kurtatchi Village

	ft.	in.
Total length of principal hut	46	2
Open front portion ('eye') of this hut (under roof and included in total length)	11	0
Length of ordinary hut varies, average about	30	0
Total width, the same for all huts	11–12	0
Height, from ridge-pole to ground	10	0
Height of side-walls (*oror*), approx.	2	0
Height of platform, front and back, approx.	2–3	0
Height of a typical doorway	1	9
Width of a typical doorway	1	4

Variations. In some of the hill villages, the front and back of the huts, instead of being closed with sheets of bark or with planks, are constructed of bamboo twisted and plaited into elaborate patterns, or laced together somewhat after the manner of a Venetian blind. Where this is found in the coast villages, as it sometimes is, e.g. at Saposa, it is done in imitation of the practice of the hill people, on the suggestion of the mission, as an improvement on the usual type of coast house. On the islands of Petats, Pororan, and Hitau, the missionaries are encouraging the building of houses of an entirely different style, raised on piles, with high walls and a pitched roof (see Pl. 3*b*). These are rapidly replacing the old-style huts, and the innovation is gradually spreading. On Petats hardly any of the old-style huts remain. There is no doubt that the raising of the house on piles, necessitating the construction of a plank floor in place of the bare ground, and the additional air and light obtained by

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the heightened walls, with a space between them and the roof, render the new style of houses an improvement from the point of view of hygiene. It involves some readjustment of native habits, if only for the reason that fires cannot so readily be made inside the house, though this difficulty is being met by the provision of an earth hearth in one corner.

TERMS USED IN CONNEXION WITH HUTS

(*Kurtatchi dialect*)

Term	*Explanation*
inu	hut.
a oror	the two side walls.
kurik	the uprights supporting the side walls.
kōbū	the planks of areca palm of which the side walls are made.
u bē	rattan, with which the *kōbū* are tied to the *kurik*.
toan	general term for all the carved posts which support the roof.
taras a toan	to carve the house-posts.
peyets	very hard wood, red when cut, of which the *toan* are made (? a species of mahogany).
gus	the taller posts in the centre, which support the ridge-pole (three or more along centre line of hut).
wal	the posts on either side of these.
pa'i	ridge-pole and two side poles, resting on the *toan* and running the length of the hut, to support the rafters. These are made of the aerial roots of the banyan (*o ō*). If it is required to distinguish the ridge-pole from the side poles, the former is called *gus* and the latter *wal*, corresponding to the verticals on which they rest.
wakwal or *tataras*	arched lathes forming rafters of roof, supporting thatch.
ariko	tree from which the *wakwal* are cut. (*Cordyline ferrea.*)
rigio	tree (with large yellow flowers) the inner bark of which is used to tie *wakwal* to cross-slats.
papou or *hikimot*	slats running parallel to side of house at intervals on both sides, keeping the *wakwal* in position.
tokiak	poles laid across the structure to serve as scaffolding, afterwards removed.
watakau	upper ridge-pole, laid on the top of the actual ridge-pole after the *wakwal* have been put into position, resting on them where they cross each other.

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pirpo	lower of two cross-pieces at ends of hut, and across at each house-post. Any kind of wood may be used for these.
tokoman	upper of two cross-pieces at ends and at house-posts.
a tō	sago palm whose leaves are used for thatch. Thatch also called *a tō*.
nin	outer bark of stem of plant of that name used to tie sheets of thatch to the *walwal*.
gerom or *girum*	mid-rib of sago-palm leaf, used to fix leaves together in lengths to make thatch.
tʃir a tō	to prepare the sago-palm leaves by taking out the mid-rib.
kisib	to make the holes for fixing the leaves together.
tʃiku a tō	to fix the leaves together into lengths ready to put on.

The men's house.

The men's house (*tobár*) is made in exactly the same way as the ordinary huts of the village; the size varies according to the number of people who are likely to use it. Besides serving as the sleeping apartment for the boys wearing the *upi*, the *tobár* is the men's club; its front verandah is seldom without a group of men sitting or standing round talking and chewing the betel mixture. To it male guests from other villages are taken on their arrival, each to the *tobár* of the clan to which he belongs.

The *tobár*, two or more, as the case may be, are sometimes placed just outside the main line of huts, from which they may be screened by a hedge of trees or a bit of uncut bush. But often they are placed in the centre of the village, abutting on, or actually in the precincts of, the central space where dances are held. The three *tobár* of the original village of Kurtatchi were a little to one side of the village, and had special paths leading from them to the shore, which might not be used by women, who avoided their vicinity altogether. The two which were constructed after the moving of the village of Gomen to join that of Kurtatchi, were built at one end of the central space, between the two lines of huts added by the Gomen people. The hut of a man who had died was taken down to make room for them, the boys who had shared it with him being afraid to go on living there. Even in that prominent position, the *tobár* were strictly avoided by the women, who always made their way round by the back of the lines of huts.

Ceremony on completion of tobár. The completion of a new *tobár* is signalized by a feast involving the killing of several pigs,

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and if subsequently it is desired to enlarge its capacity by adding further sets of house-posts and thus increasing its length, a feast is held for each set of house-posts put in. A very large *tobár* may have as many as ten sets of posts. A man who wishes to build a *tobár* of his own must put up at least ten pigs, which form part of the feast on its completion. He may then invite youths and unattached men of his own clan, at his pleasure, to occupy it.

Beyond the preparation and eating of a quantity of ceremonial pudding, no feast was held for the two *tobár* erected at Kurtatchi during my stay, because they were not really new ones, but re-erected from the old site on the removal of the people from Gomen. I was, however, invited to be present at a feast made for a new men's house in the village of Tung, on the island of Buka, soon after my arrival in the district. As I had not then any working acquaintance with the language, and was a stranger to the village, I was not able to hold much discussion with the natives about the procedure, and can do little more than describe it.

On my arrival at the village, I found three pigs lying on the floor of the new men's house (called *dzuhan* in the Petats dialect, which closely resembles that spoken at Tung). They were tied to the house-posts. A fourth was brought over from Petats in a canoe and likewise tied up. Then the slit-gong was beaten; four single beats in slow time, indicating the number of pigs that were to be killed, and a large number of quick beats said to indicate the number of taros available for the feast. Nothing further transpired till after dark, when there was a *hōma* with slit-gong but no Pan-pipes. It lasted till a short time after daybreak.

The next day, several children, all belonging to the Manu clan, whose house it was, had their hair carefully trimmed and painted, with a broad band of red in the centre of the forehead running to the back of the head, a band of black on either side of this, and a narrow line of white outlining the edge of the hair on the forehead.

Meanwhile, several men came in from the bush blowing a conch-shell and carrying poles. One pole was very long and a tuft of leaves had been left growing at the end of it. This was stuck into the ground opposite the centre of the front of the men's house. The men stood in a circle round this, each holding one of the other poles. One man beat the slit-gong in a series of slow, distinct beats, and at each beat the men thrust the poles they held into the ground, till holes had been made deep enough to keep them upright.

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upright. They were then dropped into these holes and the earth pushed up round them. A band of rattan was passed round the circle of posts about half way up them. The posts were much longer at the back of the circle, nearest the house, than at the front, ranging from about 3 feet out of the ground at the back to about 1 foot at the front.

The four pigs which had been lying on the floor of the men's house since the previous day were now untied from the house-posts. Their feet were tied together ready for carrying, and a dab of red was put on their backs, just behind the head. Then for a long time nothing happened. Finally, it appeared that they were waiting because they had not enough men to carry the pigs. I asked if they would like my servant to help them, and this offer was accepted with pleasure, although he did not belong to the village. Two men went to each pig and took it up on a pole in the usual way. They lifted the pigs out of the house, carried them round outside the circle of sticks once, and then laid them down inside it, one between each post, the poles to which they were tied for carrying resting on the cane which encircled the posts, so that the backs of the pigs were touching the ground and their heads slightly raised above it, owing to the greater length of the posts at the back.

The children whose heads had been painted were now called, and told to stand on the front platform of the men's house, looking down on the pigs. There were ten of them, six boys and four girls, all under the age of ten or thereabouts. The smallest, a girl, looked hardly more than two; her mother stood below the platform holding her hand. Unfortunately, I have no information as to what was the reason for the appearance of the children, or why girls were included in a ceremony for the men's house, from which their sex is excluded.

Gonu, the old man who was responsible for the building of the house, then came up with some red paint in a coco-nut shell and put it on the pigs, round each leg and along the stomach, pulling at the skin as he laid it on. It was in the form of dry powder, not mixed with oil as it is when used on the head. A spear was then thrust into each pig in turn, entering its near fore-leg, not far enough to kill it, but enough to make it squeal. The four poles with the pigs tied to them were lifted off the cane circle and thrown on to the ground near by. Then they were picked up again one by one and thrown on to the ground at the four corners of the space

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in front of the men's house. One was put much farther away than the others: this was intended as a present to the next village, Pokar, and would be reciprocated on the next occasion at which pigs were killed in that village.

Three of the pigs were then killed and partially cooked, in the usual way (see p. 283). The joints were piled up on the back verandah of Gonu's own house, not the new men's house. In the afternoon some men from Pokar came and fetched the pig reserved for them away—alive—in a canoe.

A crowd of guests from other Buka villages then arrived, including a number of women with their babies. All were decorated with red paint on their hair and some with dabs on their faces. As soon as it was quite dark there was a *kōma* with slit-gong, *mabu*, and Pan-pipes, with much more excitement than there had been the day before, and more people dancing, including the visitors, both men and women. Most of the women wore bands of plaited fibre round their waists, from which were suspended tails of grass or pith, which they manipulated with their hands while dancing. The men had red paint and white cockatoo feathers in their hair, and bits of phosphorescent fungus on their cheeks and on the ends of the *mabu*. There were three of these instruments. I was told they had been borrowed from the neighbouring island of Matsungan, as the village of Tung did not possess any.

The *kōma* went on till after daybreak, in spite of a heavy downpour of rain which made their finery look very bedraggled, but did not seem to abate their eagerness to dance. When it was over, the players of the Pan-pipes threw them on the ground and stamped on them, breaking them all to pieces.

Baskets of taro had been distributed in the intervals of the dance, but the pigs were not eaten till the following day. The joints had been distributed among the various houses to be cooked; these were all brought out and laid on the platform which ran the whole length of the men's house, together with a large quantity of taro, all in baskets made of plaited coco-nut leaves. The display was of great importance, and my attention was called to the quantity produced, which I was clearly expected to admire. All the members of Gonu's clan, Manu, sat inside the house, on the floor and on the platform, where I was also given a seat. Separate baskets of pig-meat and taro were put in front of each little group, who ate the contents at their leisure. Baskets were sent to members of the

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other clan resident in the village, but these were not allowed to eat in the house. The women of the Manu clan ate on the back verandah, outside the house. This is the only occasion on which women may come to the men's house. When all the provisions had either been eaten or packed up to take home, the people dispersed.

In accordance with the practice of making the most of an occasion, this feast, which was primarily intended for the new men's house, was also made to serve for the burying of the pillow belonging to Gonu's father, and for the piercing of the nasal septum of four boys who had reached the appropriate age. Both of these proceedings are described elsewhere (pp. 492 and 425).

Fire-making

Fire is made by the stick and groove method (Pl. 57). A stick of hard wood, whittled to a point—now by a trade knife, but formerly by means of a black-lip oyster-shell or with the teeth, is rubbed along a larger piece of soft wood, held down firmly, on the ground or on a log, by a second person. The person rubbing crosses his fingers over the rubbing-stick and moves it up and down using considerable pressure, till a groove is formed in the softer wood below. The dust rubbed away is pushed into a heap at the far end of the groove by means of a splinter. No other tinder is used. The time required varies considerably with the skill of the performer, but a spark is usually produced in a few seconds. The spark is then blown very carefully until the sawdust at the end of the groove ignites.

Several kinds of trees were named as being suitable for both the rubbing-stick and the grooved stick. It is essential that one should be hard and the other soft, and that the wood used for the grooved stick should have a straight grain.

TERMS USED IN CONNEXION WITH FIRE-MAKING

Term	*Explanation*
tsura	fire.
io to iun no tsura	I make fire by rubbing.
toakō	to hold the stick on which the other man is rubbing. This stick has no special name.
toeniun	the pointed stick with which the rubbing is done.
katou	the sawdust produced by the rubbing, which becomes the tinder.

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PLATE 57

MAKING FIRE BY THE STICK AND GROOVE METHOD

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[facing p. 394]

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285 them. The result is a basket with a very open mesh, with the holes in the shape of large polygons in even rows. It is called *aasat* in [184] the Petats dialect. I did not see anything of this kind at Kurtatchi.

Plaiting, done by both sexes.

285 415 A third kind of basket is made by both men and women, by the simple method of taking a length of the leaf of the coco-nut palm, cut to the size required, splitting its mid-rib to form the brim, and plaiting the fronds together for the sides (Pl. 62*a*). The bottom consists of the ends of the plaited fronds knotted together. These baskets are intended for temporary use only, and are thrown away when done with. The women use them chiefly for putting cooked taro ready in the rafters or other convenient place so that members of the family can help themselves when they are hungry. The men use them to carry their pipes, tobacco, and the ingredients for chewing the betel-mixture. For this purpose the men make them with a hole in the middle of each side, near the top, through which they thrust their hands and wrists, for convenience in carrying.

342 The fronds of coco-nut palm leaves are also plaited together to make a covering for the ridge-pole of the huts, to block an opening, or to make a partition or a screen from the wind. The fronds on the left side of one leaf and the right side of another are stripped off, the leaves laid side by side with the sides on which the fronds still remain turned towards each other. The mid-ribs, laid bare on the other side, then form the outer edges of the matting, which is made by intertwining the fronds of one leaf with the fronds of the other (Pl. 62*b*). If a very wide piece of plaiting is required, three leaves may be used, the fronds on both sides of the extra one being intertwined with those of the two others, which are placed one on each side of it, the edges of the finished article being formed of the mid-rib of the outer ones.

NOTE ON STONE IMPLEMENTS

412 324 177 The stone implements of the olden days have now been entirely superseded by trade knives, axes, and adzes, which can be obtained from the planters' stores, or are brought back by men returning from indentured labour at Rabaul or elsewhere. But the use of these latter has been general only for about two generations, and numerous specimens of stone implements are still lying about the villages, some being used to grind the blades of their modern

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PLATE 64

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a. PLAYING *MABU*

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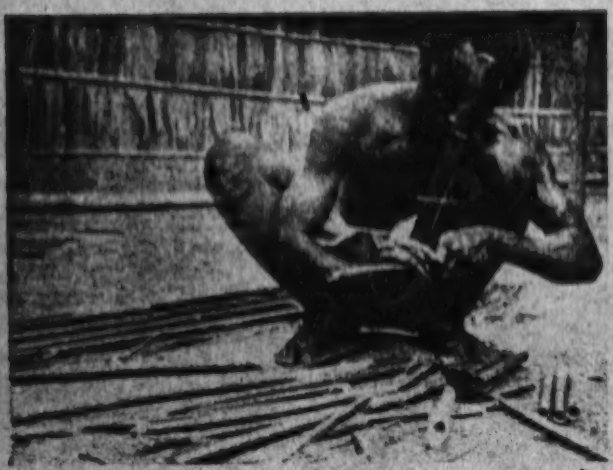

b. MAKING PAN-PIPES

[facing P. 412]

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she must buy it, paying in any commodity that happens to be available. But when a big feast, such as the *watawutf*, is held, each must contribute to the common stock for the entertainment of the vast crowds of visitors who will arrive for the occasion.

Portions of land are allotted by the *tsunaun* to any one who wishes to plant coco-nut palms.[1] These trees are then his personal property, and no one would take nuts from them without his consent, except such near relatives as children, or brothers and sisters, both blood and classificatory. However thirsty a man may be while on a journey, he would not think of climbing a coco-nut palm to shake down nuts, unless he came to a grove to whose owner he stood in such relationship.

Ownership is also recognized in certain trees, such as those used for making dug-out canoes, or those valued for their fruit, such as the canarium almond. It may be established by planting the tree, or inherited from a relative who planted. These trees will be on land which, though vested in the *tsunaun*, and said to 'belong to' him, is used by the whole group, as explained in a previous paragraph, so that the ownership of trees is differentiated from the ownership of the land they stand on. To a great extent it is true here, as is described by Thurnwald at Buin (1912, p. 34), that property is connected chiefly with the results of work.

Pigs.

Pigs rank as property next in importance to strings of *imun* and above *beroan*. They are entirely personal possessions, and may be owned by anybody, man, woman, or child. A man with no pigs is regarded as poor, but there is nothing to prevent him from gaining prestige in the village by other means. Sobak, one of the prominent rain-makers of Kurtatchi, had no pigs, and though this was sometimes the subject of rather jeering comment, it did not prevent him from receiving a certain amount of deference in view of his skill at rain-making. But a man without pigs is debarred from certain privileges. For example, only a man who can produce ten pigs may build a *tobar* (boys' house), and those wishing to make use of this *tobar* pay a pig to the owner, except the boys wearing the *upi*, who are exempt.

Each person knows his own pigs individually, treats them as

[1] The Government has now instituted a rule that every man must plant ten coco-nut palms for each of his children at birth.

Dwellings

House construction differs in the various parts of the region in question. The Sir Charles Hardy Islands, the Carteret Islands, Buka, and north Bougainville do not differ essentially from one another. Here the huts, for the most part, are situated one beside the other, five to ten in number, the gable ends with the entrance facing the street and the sides so close together that there is scarcely room to pass between them. These buildings vary in length from 6 to 12 meters and in width from 3 to 5 meters with a height of from 3 to 4 meters. The side walls are about half a meter high and consist of strips of the outer hardwood of a palm species, which are laid vertically next to one another and tied firmly to horizontal strips of the same material. Strong central pillars carry the roof, and thin strips of palm wood are fastened perpendicular to the ridgepole in such a way that they extend far beyond the side walls and, when the framework is covered with leaves, almost conceal these sidewalls. These rafters are connected and firmly attached to each other by roof laths, which run parallel to the ridge pole; as a rule the whole roof frame is slightly rounded. As roof covering either woven coconut leaves are used or far more frequently the leaves of another palm--if I am not mistaken, Phytelephas; these leaves are placed individually on a rod about 1 1/2 meters long, and a leaf rib penetrates the individual leaves in such a way that they cover each other and cannot slide off the rod. These individual roof sections are now fastened next to each other and tightly over one another on the roof framework and make a cool impenetrable roof. The gable ends are faced with boards that are split from a tree trunk with an ax and carefully smoothed; and here, about one-half meter above the floor is the entrance, a small rectangular hole, just large enough for a man to slip through comfortably. On the same level with this entrance there is an approximately 1 meter wide platform which takes up the whole width of the gable end and is shaded by the projecting roof; this place is the favorite haunt of the women and children, who, at the slightest suspicious noise, slip from here into the hut and close the little door behind them. Inside, the huts are frequently divided by walls into individual compartments that serve for living, sleeping and cooking. The beds are usually board and bamboo frames that are slightly raised above the floor; sometimes

342 [171] [824] 352

a simple coconut leaf mat on the hard packed floor takes the place of these. Under and next to each bed a glowing and smoking coal fire is kept burning during the night--partially to warm the body and partially as protection against gnats. Since the previously mentioned entrance to the hut is the only opening, obviously only a little light enters. Moreover, the hut is completely darkened by the constant smoke, and it is very difficult to distinguish one thing from another inside this dwelling. 352 [354] 342

In this region the chieftains have no special houses, and there are likewise no special assembly houses like the ones we encounter farther to the south. If now and then a chieftain has a larger hut, then the front compartment is generally open, and the big wooden signal drums stand here. This place is also used as the council room of the old men or as the reception room for guests, and thus it substitutes for the taboo houses that will be mentioned later. 344 362

In southern Bougainville as well as on the island of Fauro, the dwellings are frequently built on piles about three to four meters high; a ladder leads up to the door opening. Here the roofs are not so carefully constructed as in the north. The two flat sides are not rounded, and meet at a very obtuse angle. In addition to these pile dwellings there are also huts built on level ground. In the Shortland Islands the latter are more prevalent. 342 171

[18] Characteristic for this part of the islands, however, are the taboo houses and the large houses of the chieftains. Coming from the north, we encounter the first so-called "taboo house" in the village of Toborol on the east coast of Bougainville. The word "taboo house" is, strictly speaking, a false designation; it would be more correct to say "men's assembly house" since only women and children are forbidden to enter the building. These assembly houses are rather spacious buildings; the floor plan is a rectangle of 15 to 20 meters in length and 6 to 10 meters in width. The side walls are 2 to 2 1/2 meters high; the gable ends are open and the corner posts are sometimes carved--sometimes in the form of the human figure, sometimes in the form of a shark, but just as frequently the carving is a decoration consisting of zigzag lines, rectangles and other geometrical figures. On the side walls of the house tree trunks or bamboo canes are attached to one another to make a long bench; here the men and the youths squat or lie. The favorite place--I am almost 344 171

4: Thomas U-5 (no date) 1931 ON6 Buka ON6
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CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS OF THE NATIVES OF BUKA. PLATE II.
A. *Two* bahuan *and four* malai *images.* B. *A group of* tseezen *and* putz-putzi *with a* bahuan *image.*

[p.230(B)]